

U.S. Department of Education
2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 12TX2

School Type (Public Schools): ☐ Charter ☒ Title 1 ☐ Magnet ☐ Choice
(Check all that apply, if any)

Name of Principal: Ms. Wendy Graves

Official School Name: Montgomery Elementary School

School Mailing Address: P O Box 1475
 Montgomery, TX 77356-1887

County: Montgomery County State School Code Number*: 170903103

Telephone: (936) 232-5311 E-mail: wgraves@misd.org

Fax: (936) 597-6339 Web site/URL: www.misd.org/

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. Beau Rees Ed.D. Superintendent e-mail: brees@misd.org

District Name: Montgomery ISD District Phone: (936) 582-1333

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Trish Mayne

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

12TX2

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2011-2012 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

12TX2

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
(per district designation): 3 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
8 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 7012

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Suburban
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 10
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	22	24	46		6	0	0	0
K	53	69	122		7	0	0	0
1	70	90	160		8	0	0	0
2	65	54	119		9	0	0	0
3	90	56	146		10	0	0	0
4	64	75	139		11	0	0	0
5	0	0	0		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								732

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
1 % Asian
9 % Black or African American
18 % Hispanic or Latino
1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
69 % White
1 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2010-2011 school year: 8%

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred to the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	6
(2)	Number of students who transferred from the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	55
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	61
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	721
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.08
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	8

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 12%

Total number of ELL students in the school: 88

Number of non-English languages represented: 2

Specify non-English languages:

Spanish, Vietnamese

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 47%

Total number of students who qualify: 352

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 8%

Total number of students served: 58

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>6</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>10</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>4</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>6</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>45</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>1</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>7</u> Mental Retardation	<u>6</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>37</u>	<u>0</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>10</u>	<u>1</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>62</u>	<u>1</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 20:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

Graduating class size:	_____
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____ %
Enrolled in a community college	_____ %
Enrolled in vocational training	_____ %
Found employment	_____ %
Military service	_____ %
Other	_____ %
Total	_____ 0%

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

☒ No

☐ Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

PART III - SUMMARY

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Montgomery Elementary School in Montgomery, Texas has a long-standing tradition of achievement and excellence worthy of Blue Ribbon status. The mission of Montgomery Elementary School is to create a partnership between the school and the home, enabling students to reach their full potential in academic excellence and become productive citizens. The MES motto “Learners Today, Leaders Tomorrow” is one that staff members take to heart, working hard to create an atmosphere where students flourish and excel.

Montgomery, Texas is a growing community located in southeast Texas. Known as the birthplace of the Texas flag, the historic town of Montgomery is only about two square miles, but approximately 55,000 people living in the surrounding area consider themselves residents. Despite the growing population, Montgomery retains a small town feeling, and residents have great pride in the community. Montgomery Independent School District serves almost 7,000 students and covers 231.1 square miles of Montgomery County. The town of Montgomery is made up of suburban-type neighborhoods as well as more isolated, rural areas.

Montgomery Elementary School currently serves 760 pre-kindergarten through fourth grade students. The population of Montgomery Elementary is comprised of 18% Hispanic, 9% African-American, and 69% White students, with 47% of the student population identified as economically disadvantaged. Montgomery Elementary is home to the district’s bilingual education program at the elementary level, with students coming from all attendance zones to receive those services. To promote cross-cultural understanding and biliteracy, the district’s first dual language program has been introduced at Montgomery Elementary.

With almost 37% of the student population identified as at-risk, it is understood that instruction must be driven by research-based instructional strategies to meet the needs of all students. Staff members participate in collaborative book studies and other professional learning activities on campus to ensure that instructional practices are current and address the changing needs of the student population and their families. MES prides itself on fostering a supportive atmosphere where focus is placed on working with families, as well as creating a school family.

The teachers, students, and school have celebrated many accomplishments and milestones in recent years. For ten consecutive years, Montgomery Elementary School has received an accountability rating of Exemplary from the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the highest rating given, as well as being named a Distinguished Title I School for six consecutive years. The National Center for Educational Achievement has awarded MES the Higher Performing School Award three times, an award reserved for the top 5% of schools in the state. Recently, MES was invited to partner with Sam Houston State University as a USDE Professional Development School. While designations and awards are meaningful, the real pride lies in the student success rate year after year. The conscientious efforts and determination of the staff, students, and families of Montgomery Elementary School have established this tradition of excellence and achievement. With a new state assessment on the horizon, MES staff and students plan to continue a pattern of success and reach new milestones in coming years.

Montgomery Elementary prides itself on the inclusion of families and the community as a whole in many activities and traditions. Meet the Teacher Night, Numbers and Nachos, and Family Literacy Night are only a few examples. During these special events, teachers share knowledge or activities that enhance student learning. The entire school community looks forward to these special events year after year. Dinner is often served free of charge to encourage family participation. Service projects such as Hats Off for Heroes, Pennies for Patients, and sponsorship of our community’s annual Holiday Cookie Walk benefitting the historical society are ways in which Montgomery Elementary students, their families, and staff members give back to the community that has supported student learning and academic achievement. Staff members, in conjunction with the school’s parent organization, have piloted a Watch

DOGS (Watch Dads of Great Students) program in the district to establish relationships with fathers and father-figures to increase their comfort level and visibility on campus. This program, already proving to be successful, will surely become a new MES tradition.

In recent years, Montgomery Elementary School has established technology initiatives to ensure students are not only achieving academic excellence, but are provided the equipment and hands-on learning opportunities needed to be 21st century learners. Staff members have formed learning communities across grade levels for support in incorporating innovative learning opportunities for students that address diverse learning styles.

The staff of Montgomery Elementary School believes that success comes from reciprocal support. Relationships and traditions established between all stakeholders are valued. They work hard to communicate these beliefs through a supportive atmosphere that welcomes and encourages involvement from all. The school's dedication to excellence clearly illustrates Montgomery Elementary School's unwavering commitment to quality education for all.

1. Assessment Results:

A. Montgomery Elementary School's commitment to excellence is reflected in the consistent levels of high student achievement. A trend of student success has been established over the past five years, even as increased depth and rigor have challenged the entire school community to achieve at higher levels. MES staff members attribute this tradition of success to a research-based, well-developed curriculum and an atmosphere where teachers and students receive the support they need to be successful.

In recent years, all public school students in the state of Texas grades 3 through 11 have been required to take the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test. The TAKS assessment is an indicator of student success based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) which is a state-mandated curriculum that standardizes and streamlines learning goals and objectives across the state. Performance standards relate test performance to the state curriculum, outlining student learning expectations by the completion of each grade level. The Texas Education Agency issues a school accountability rating based on the percentage of students passing the state assessment. A school with 90% or more of all students passing in all subject areas assessed is eligible for an Exemplary rating. A rating of Recognized signifies passing rates of 80%-89% and Academically Acceptable passing rates are 70%-79%. Schools deemed Academically Unacceptable would have passing rates below 70%. Montgomery Elementary School's data has ranked at the highest level year after year, earning the school a rating of Exemplary. The high standards and expectations for student achievement are such that a rating of Exemplary is the goal year after year. All stakeholders are in constant collaboration to ensure that this goal is reached, assessing benchmarks and measuring success along the way.

B. Montgomery Elementary School's staff, students, and families expect success and high levels of achievement. Data from the 2010-2011 school year shows that MES students performed on track for the high expectations set by the entire school community. Ninety-eight percent of MES third grade students passed the Reading portion of the TAKS test, and 99% of MES third grade students passed the Math portion of the TAKS test. Fourth grade students performed equally well with 98% passing the Reading portion and 99% passing the Math portion. Fourth grade students also take the Writing portion of the TAKS test with 97% passing this test. In each area tested, MES passing rates were above the state average.

With high achievement in mind, students at Montgomery Elementary School aim to exceed the minimum passing standard set by the state. Not only were the overall passing rates impressive, individual scores were superb. Individual students are eligible to receive the recognition known as commended performance. To receive commended performance, a student may not miss more than two questions on a test. In third grade, the commended performance rates of MES students were 62% in Reading and 44% in Math. In fourth grade, the commended performance rates were 60% in Reading, 53% in Math, and 54% in Writing. MES received Gold Performance Acknowledgement in the areas of Reading and Math for the 2010-2011 academic year, having had at least 25% of all students and student groups score at the commended level. Gold Performance Acknowledgement is an honor that MES is proud to have received year after year. In the last ten years, Gold Performance Acknowledgement has been received annually for Reading, twice for Writing, and once for Math. These honors are reflective of the importance that Montgomery Elementary places on providing students with learning opportunities tailored to individual learning styles and needs.

Data from previous years show similar trends in student success at Montgomery Elementary School. Five years of data illustrates a tradition of high achievement where students not only meet minimum standards for passing the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), but reach beyond the standards. The same holds true for economically disadvantaged students, a statistically significant subgroup. This student population has consistently reached and surpassed state standards in line with the Exemplary

accountability rating earned by MES. These consistent levels of high achievement are rooted in a research-based, well-developed curriculum that accounts for the needs of MES students.

It is the goal of the school in coming years to continue raising the percentages of students receiving commended performance honors in all areas. Another area of focus is with African-American students. Where this student population did well in most areas, focus on improvement with this group in the areas of Math and Writing will continue. Data used to identify this need involve small numbers of students, but staff members at MES strive to identify areas of potential betterment to ensure all students reach their full potential. The Math portion of the TAKS test showed only five of the six African-American third grade students tested passed the assessment, and the Writing portion of the TAKS test showed that only eleven of twelve African-American fourth grade students tested passed the assessment. While these numbers fall below the designation of an identified subgroup for the purpose of an accountability rating, it is the expectation of Montgomery Elementary School that all students succeed and work will continue to ensure that goal is reached.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Montgomery Elementary School uses a variety of assessments, both formal and informal, to determine needs of individual students, groups of students, and the entire student body. During team meetings with and without school administration, the highly qualified teaching staff adjusts instruction and student grouping to address needs. Assessment results and instructional adjustments are communicated to parents to encourage collaboration, reciprocal understanding, and reinforcement of the importance of home and school working together to ensure student success. Weekly folders, face-to-face and phone conferences, and parent information nights, including a yearly report card informational meeting, are some of the ways that this information is communicated. It is a goal of Montgomery Elementary School staff members to ensure parents and family members are well-informed concerning their child's education. The more parents and families know about daily classroom activities, the more confident they feel that the instructional and organizational decisions being made are in the best interest of MES students.

The Montgomery Elementary School teaching staff collaborates for organized and clear vertical alignment in all subject areas to ensure that the state standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), build and layer from one grade level to the next with no gaps in learning. This process allows for district and campus benchmark assessments to accurately evaluate the level of mastery and instructional rigor at each grade level. Benchmark assessments are evaluated and discussed to address any mastery concerns for individual students or groups of students. Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) data is disaggregated by individuals. Plans are then created to address the deficits and strengths of each student. Those educational plans are implemented in the classroom, in small group situations, and through differentiation. Because data is reported late in the school year, this approach offers immediate student support through the end of the school year and into the following year. Other assessments utilized to determine student strengths or needs include the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI), the Texas Early Mathematics Inventory (TEMI), and AIMSweb for data management. The outcomes of these assessments also assist in identifying students who are at risk, allowing informed placement with an intervention or enrichment plan that meets needs and learning styles.

When trends are identified in assessment data of any kind, instruction shifts to meet the needs of students. Re-teaching or revisiting concepts, altering the pace, or approaching a concept in a whole new manner are some of the strategies utilized to improve instruction. Data is also used to identify potential introduction of increased depth where appropriate, as the academic needs of all students, whether struggling or excelling, are equally important to the staff of MES. Not only is this data used to evaluate instructional strategies, it is communicated to staff members, students, and families of Montgomery Elementary School.

As a campus with a number of successes and recognitions in recent years, including the 2012 Blue Ribbon Schools nomination, value is placed on including the entire community in the learning processes and outcomes occurring at MES. Montgomery Elementary School understands the concept of

transparency, freely and openly discussing and communicating successes as well as needs and concerns to community members. Staff members are proud to be a part of MES and speak openly to communicate instructional milestones as they take place. The value placed on collaboration sets the tone for such open communication. The school website and local newspapers are often used to openly convey information and celebrate student achievements. Various uses of social media are currently being explored to ensure a wide audience with an interest in the school can access information with ease. Community support and participation in celebrating student achievements is something the school takes seriously. It enables community members to feel like stakeholders and empowers students to take pride in their accomplishments.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Montgomery Elementary School prides itself on the use of effective, research-based instructional strategies and practices to reach every single student, encouraging their highest achievement levels. Staff members are eager to share what works best based on their experiences, which further illustrates the collaborative attitude and enthusiasm for teaching that MES is known for.

Local high school students considering a career in education visit the MES campus weekly, observing instruction and assisting teachers as part of the Ready, Set, Teach! program. Montgomery Elementary School also hosts students from university teacher preparation programs, offering classroom observations, teaching methods, and student teaching opportunities. These mentorships work reciprocally, allowing opportunities for pre-service teachers to gain knowledge and application of proven instructional methods from the MES teaching staff. In turn, they share new information being presented at the university level and trends in technology use with their classroom mentor. Through a partnership with Sam Houston State University, it is the hope of Montgomery Elementary School to offer even more support for pre-service teachers through the USDE Professional Development Schools program.

At the district level, the staff of Montgomery Elementary School has had numerous opportunities to share successful strategies with instructors on other campuses. Training sessions addressing the use of technology in the classroom, writing strategies, and recommendations for effective small group instruction have been shared with classroom teachers and administrators across the district. Teaching staff specializing in math recently presented videos illustrating real classroom examples of using math instructional strategies in a small group setting through video recorded segments. A campus reading specialist has presented information to groups of teachers across the United States on Montgomery Elementary School's adopted reading program, Read Well, demonstrating how to effectively and efficiently implement small group instruction in the regular classroom. In fact, MES is currently working with Voyager to measure effectiveness of the program, including trends in student growth in the areas of fluency, comprehension, and word study.

Campus administration has been asked to share best practices to groups of educators working in principal/administration preparation programs in the area. Sharing ideas on school organization, staffing strategies, and the importance of being a curricular leader on campus offers valuable learning opportunities for other districts and future administrators.

Outside visitors from other school districts have visited Montgomery Elementary School to observe a variety of classroom settings. MES is home to a multi-age classroom where two grade levels comprise one homeroom class as well as several regular education classrooms where utilization of the push-in model for special education offers support for students with special needs. The campus welcomes opportunities for showcasing the research-based, experience-driven, student-oriented instructional strategies used on campus.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Montgomery Elementary School values a supportive partnership between schools, families, and the community. With this in mind, a variety of strategies and partnerships are utilized to encourage student

success.

Family Literacy Night and Numbers and Nachos are evening events held on campus annually. Family Literacy Night showcases an author or entertainer whose program focuses on the value of literacy, motivating students and parents to read together. Numbers and Nachos is organized so that families visit classrooms and participate in math games and activities to enrich student learning while focusing on strengthening communication between the home and the school. Families leave with learning games that can be used at home to reinforce student learning. Dinner is served free of charge at both events, offering families a reprieve from providing dinner. The annual Open House event includes a curriculum fair to encourage parent understanding, awareness, and involvement in the learning process and MES curriculum. Prior to the first day of school, the annual Meet the Teacher event is held on campus offering families an opportunity to familiarize themselves with new faces. Annual attendance and feedback shows that parents and students alike look forward to the evening.

Throughout the year, opportunities for involvement during the school day are offered. On Grandparents' Day, grandparents visit campus and are involved in learning activities, creating an appreciation of the role extended families play in learning. A recently piloted Watch DOGS program (Watch Dads of Great Students) is proving to be successful in involving fathers and father-figures in daily volunteer opportunities and mentorships with students. Participation in the program has been beyond the expectations of those organizing it. Other parent organizations, campus advisory committee positions, and flexible volunteer opportunities help parents and community members feel welcomed, schedule-accommodated, and valued.

Montgomery Elementary School partners with local businesses and community members to garner support and establish relationships benefiting all members of the school family. MES facilitates a project offering family support when needed through the holiday Angel Tree program. Meals and gifts are collected for families struggling financially during the holiday season. Community members, local churches, and businesses donate items. Similar assistance is offered through back to school programs and coat drives sponsored by the school and parent organizations. Partnering with Wal-Mart, MES provides school supplies to students including lunchboxes and backpacks. Wal-Mart also provides teacher incentives and donations to classrooms each year. Working with community organizations and churches, Montgomery Elementary School provides food staples to families for weekend consumption when breakfast and lunch is not available as it is during the week. Partnerships with local restaurants ease the cost of providing meals to families for special events like Family Literacy Night and Numbers and Nachos.

Many of these strategies have been in place for years and continue to offer support for students, families, and community members, directly and indirectly influencing character, wellness, and success of MES students.

1. Curriculum:

Staff members of Montgomery Elementary expect and encourage all students to be active participants in the learning process. Montgomery Elementary School utilizes a core curriculum using the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as the foundation for instruction, while supplementing with a variety of activities to maximize student interest and motivation. Collaboration is used to design and organize learning opportunities that not only support the state-mandated curriculum, but address the unique interests and characteristics of the MES student. Instructional technology plays an integral role in all curricular areas to address specific needs of students and create 21st century learners. As part of a technology initiative at Montgomery Elementary, all classrooms are equipped with interactive technology such as tablets and whiteboards to support the curriculum, maximize the learning experience, and engage learners. Students are commonly observed using interactive whiteboards, iPads, and computers from a mobile computer lab available for classroom use. Classrooms at MES are busy places where several activities are taking place simultaneously.

The reading/English language arts curriculum has been organized so that students are given ample opportunity to receive whole group instruction, small group instruction, individual attention, and enrichment opportunities at all grade levels. This approach offers opportunities for all students to excel, regardless of their current achievement level. Montgomery Elementary School believes these diverse teaching environments provide opportunities for remediation as well as enrichment and extension to personalize instruction and build confident learners. Writing for a variety of purposes is practiced and intertwined into all curricular areas. Student writing is monitored starting in kindergarten with the use of writing spirals. Incorporation of instructional technology, coupled with library/media center support, encourages interactive classrooms where students are actively engaged. Use of technology like educational apps on classroom iPads and interactive whiteboards reinforce literacy skills for individuals or groups of students while others work in small groups, maximizing learning opportunities.

The mathematics curriculum is designed much the same way, in that students are given opportunities to engage in whole group and small group learning, receive individual attention, and extend learning beyond instruction. Collaboration is constant, with teaching staff working together to establish current and common vocabulary, horizontal and vertical alignment, and instructional strategies most appropriate for students. Math curriculum and instruction is focused on offering MES students in-depth knowledge and application of concepts in which real life connections are made to build life-long learners. The use of manipulatives and other instructional activities encouraging hands-on learning is greatly valued by Montgomery Elementary School staff members, students, and families. Teacher created math tubs assist in skill spiraling in the classroom setting. The use of interactive tablets allows students and teachers to actively model learning to small groups or in a whole class setting. MES strives to engage students actively whenever appropriate to increase the likelihood that students are connected with and immersed in learning.

Science and social studies curriculum have been designed for integration into all curricular areas. Weekly visits to the Montgomery Elementary School science lab offer concept application opportunities for students while motivating and engaging students in active learning. Health and nutrition education is integrated into core curricular areas, physical education, and specials classes using the Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) program. To support good character and combat bullying, MES uses the Character Counts! character education program school wide. Visual and performing arts are supported at Montgomery Elementary School through the creation of a performance choir and drama club, both of which encourage participation of students from all cultures and socioeconomic status. Grade level musical productions are showcased annually at the district high school performing arts center. To further encourage arts appreciation, Main Street Theater of Houston, Texas has performed full-costume touring

productions to the students of MES, providing the only professional theater experience many have experienced.

2. Reading/English:

The reading/English language arts curriculum is designed with the goal of creating well-rounded and eloquent communicators with a wide variety of literacy experiences. The reading curriculum across grade levels is built upon the following components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Focus is also placed on literature appreciation and writing for a variety of audiences and purposes.

At the lower grade levels, use of the research-validated Read Well reading program offers students and teachers flexible pacing, ongoing progress monitoring, and differentiation strategies. Chosen because of these features, MES has used the Read Well program for eight years. Introduced in first grade, the success of the program has inspired program extension into kindergarten and second grade classrooms. In third and fourth grades, use of state-adopted textbooks supporting the TEKS and contemporary and classic literature offers students at varying levels diverse learning experiences and instructional materials. Small and whole group instruction occurs across grade levels. Small group instruction allows students of similar skill levels to receive specialized instruction to address specific needs. Grouping is flexible and enables movement based on formal and informal observations and assessment.

Students at Montgomery Elementary School explore a variety of instructional strategies on the road to literacy. Phonemic awareness and decoding are the focus in early reading instruction. Fluency, comprehension, and metacognition are modeled and encouraged across subject areas at all levels. To address the varying needs of learners, small group reading instruction is the foundation of literacy learning in early grades. MES believes this approach enables students to become more independent learners as they enter third and fourth grades.

To improve the reading skills of struggling readers, intervention teams work with struggling readers daily. Summative and formative assessment data is used to create individualized plans to meet student needs. The partnership of classroom teaching professionals with the Title I reading support professional is paramount to the literacy success of many MES students. Small student groups work with her daily, and she offers classroom support to teachers. Other programs such as dyslexia support, co-teaching partnerships, and a daily intervention/enrichment period known as Power Up aide in addressing the needs of all students. High-achieving and gifted students receive accelerated curricular extensions in small group settings in the classroom and during the daily Power Up period.

Montgomery Elementary classrooms offer a variety of literature to students in print and audio formats. The school library/media center provides a comprehensive collection focused on the school curriculum and student interest in both English and Spanish.

3. Mathematics:

The goal of the mathematics curriculum in place at Montgomery Elementary School is to create opportunities for students to gain an in-depth understanding of math concepts, become problem solvers, and make real world math connections that can be transferred from one situation to another. Montgomery Elementary School students participate in an instructional approach to mathematics that is grounded in hands-on learning. Through the use of manipulatives, discovery, and discussion, students are given the tools and guidance to create ownership of their learning and develop solid foundations of math concepts.

The mathematics curriculum, based on the TEKS, is supplemented with research-based strategies from Singapore Math to highlight and reinforce the importance of problem solving strategies and applications. The Singapore Math framework involves acquisition and application of math concepts in a variety of settings and situations where the focus is metacognition and problem solving. Students are expected to manipulate and discuss as they solve problems, offering teachers opportunities to check for understanding

and assist students in a deeper understanding of concepts because of the ability to follow a student's thoughts and reasoning as they communicate. The model drawing component calls for students to draw diagrams representative of problem situations, allowing for students to visualize strategies. Many of the strategies encouraged work especially well for students working toward full English acquisition. The active participation and verbal interactions are documented strategies for working with ESL students.

As with reading/language arts, students at Montgomery Elementary School receive differentiated math instruction in small group settings as well as whole group instruction in the regular classroom. Small group learning opportunities offer more challenging lesson extensions for students with high levels of achievement and remediation opportunities for others. Many students performing below grade level work with a Title I math support professional to reinforce concepts and modify pacing. The program builds confidence for struggling learners while creating an environment in which they feel free to ask questions and work at an individualized pace to ensure strong conceptual foundations. The recently introduced iLearn for RtI software program assists in progress monitoring and diagnosis of learning gaps to ensure all learners are given the opportunity to achieve. Regardless of the level of the student, the Montgomery Elementary mathematics curriculum and instructional strategies call for actively engaged students who are problem solvers.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

The mission of Montgomery Elementary School is to create a partnership between the school and the home, enabling students to reach their full potential in academic excellence and become productive citizens. The physical education program at Montgomery Elementary School integrates skills and concepts from across the curriculum to help students achieve these goals.

The physical education curriculum is designed to integrate grade appropriate concepts and skills from across all subject areas. The Montgomery Elementary Mileage Club incorporates math, geography, and science into the physical education curriculum. Each Friday, students venture outside to jog or walk a measured $\frac{1}{4}$ mile loop. With wooden craft sticks to track individual student progress, a log book, and a map of the United States, the students map out how far they traveled. Distances between cities are marked showing group progress. Virtual visits to state capitals teach students weather differences as students "travel" across the United States. Students calculate how far they will need to travel to reach a specific destination, sparking curiosity about different cities and states across the nation. Older students utilize sums and averages as they track distances walked or jogged, the amount of time it took, and their target heart rates. The purpose of the activity is to improve cardiovascular endurance and to motivate students to improve their personal bests while linking learning to core curricular concepts. Significant improvements and achievements are acknowledged weekly.

A variety of other physical education activities integrate tactile/kinesthetic learning with academic learning. Garble, a game that reinforces reading and spelling skills, builds physical agility as students race to spell words using letters scattered on the floor of the gymnasium. Another popular game called Pyramid Battle calls for the use of addition, greater than/less than, or multiplication, depending on the grade level, to determine which team advances to the next level of play. Pyramid Battle includes cardiovascular endurance training as students are required to run to the next station or back to the starting point.

Family involvement is encouraged through communication of activities and volunteer opportunities like assisting with field day and other special events. Students are taught the importance of honesty, fairness, teamwork, and good sportsmanship. The combination of these important skills, coupled with physical wellness and curricular concepts, reinforce Montgomery Elementary's mission to create partnerships between home and school that enable students to achieve their full potential.

5. Instructional Methods:

Instructional methods and strategies at Montgomery Elementary School are designed with the individual student in mind. With focus on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), whole group instruction takes place to address the overall needs of the group. Whole group instruction is modified based on findings from ongoing formal and informal assessments, collaboration between teachers, and parent feedback. When a need is seen that would benefit the group, instructional strategies reflect that.

Small group instruction is valued and utilized in all grade levels at Montgomery Elementary School. Small group instruction provides MES students opportunities for remediation as well as enrichment and extension to personalize instruction. Feedback is more easily personalized and specific during small group instruction, as students are often more comfortable sharing and participating in small groups where they are working with learners at similar achievement levels.

When possible, differentiation for student subgroups occurs in small and whole group settings in the regular classroom. This approach ensures instruction is provided for students with special needs in the regular classroom setting, whether they are served through the push-in model for special education or language proficiency programs like ESL. Bilingual and dual-language programs provide environments for students to learn with a multilingual professional familiar with learning strategies for curricular concepts made more challenging by language barriers. The dual-language program, newly piloted at MES, is designed to create two sets of biliterate students. A balanced group comprised of native English speaking students and native Spanish speaking students receives literacy, language, and content area instruction in two languages. A daily enrichment and intervention period called Power Up offers another opportunity for students to work in small groups on targeted instruction to meet specific needs. Gifted and talented curriculum extension, math reinforcement, or activities focused on social skills are examples of some of what might be observed during daily Power Up instruction. All grouping is decided using collaboration and assessment data.

Technology is incorporated into learning at all levels, inside and outside the classroom setting. Students use interactive whiteboards to extend hands-on learning opportunities during daily calendar review in the lower grades and through the use of e-books in upper grades. Document cameras and Mobi boards offer enhanced learning experiences, allowing students to easily observe and participate in class activities. ESL students use computers, iPads, and MP3 players to deepen vocabulary knowledge and increase reading fluency through the use of audiobooks. Special education students are engaged learners and communicators through the use of iPads, whiteboards, and other assistive devices.

At Montgomery Elementary, instructional methods are designed with high achievement standards for all students in mind. Understanding that each student deserves every opportunity to be successful, the MES teaching staff works hard to seek out and implement teaching methods and instructional strategies to continue a tradition of student success.

6. Professional Development:

Professional development at Montgomery Elementary School occurs in line with the goal of the school. Focus is placed on building an environment where students reach their full potential. To maintain high student achievement, MES utilizes a variety of professional learning opportunities that include learning from each other, independently, and from outside resources to increase student achievement. All professional development activities are chosen or designed with student achievement in mind.

The MES teaching staff is viewed as a valuable resource of professional experience. Professional collaboration occurs daily to enhance classroom instruction as teachers plan together and establish common instructional strategies and vocabulary. Tech Tuesday trainings provided by staff members offer MES teachers ideas for implementing instructional technology to address state standards and enhance instruction. More formal staff development takes place during district staff development days during which Montgomery Elementary staff members share their experiences with student success, technology

integration, and instructional strategies for differentiation. MES math teachers have video recorded informational segments on topics such as vertical alignment and small group instructional interventions. These videos provided teachers across the school and district learning opportunities based on the district and state curricular goals. Mentorships and a New Teacher Academy provide professional support and guidance for those new to the field or new to the school district.

Montgomery Elementary encourages students to become independent learners who identify and recognize their needs. The same holds true for its staff members. Often, staff members can best judge their individual needs and are capable of self-initiated learning. Independent study is encouraged and valued as part of the professional development process. Campus-wide book studies, recently addressing best-practices and tools for teaching impoverished students, have led to independent study situations where teachers identified an area of personal interest to investigate further. Book studies help staff members gain important insight into the needs of student groups at MES.

Learning opportunities provided by outside entities are necessary for staff members of Montgomery Elementary School to stay current on implementation of new standards and state assessments. A variety of strategies to incorporate such learning opportunities are utilized including workshop/conference attendance, distance learning, webinars, and on-campus trainings. MES teachers and administrators recently participated in a series of webinars to better understand and prepare students for a new state assessment, the benefits of which have been apparent on recent benchmark assessments. Teachers have attended dual language conferences and trainings highlighting strategies to encourage brain-based learning, offering new instructional strategies for mastery of grade level TEKS.

7. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy of Montgomery Elementary School is to create a school-wide learning community in which all stakeholders feel empowered and enabled to create and participate in exceptional learning experiences. Stakeholders include students, staff members, families, and community members who work together to create a collaborative learning community.

The Montgomery Elementary campus principal plays an active role as instructional leader. Aware and active in curriculum development, she frequently and openly communicates with staff members soliciting information on achievements and concerns. Working in collaboration with teaching staff, the administrative team regularly reviews data to stay informed of student achievement and needs. The administrative team, including the principal, assistant principal, and counselor, provides resources and works to ensure teaching staff feel supported and enabled to provide instruction that meets the diverse needs of all students. By providing resources and support as well as participating in learning with teachers and students, the MES administrative team models focus on student achievement.

School administrators at Montgomery Elementary School are visible, appearing each morning on The Bear Buzz, the morning announcement broadcast. Students and classes are featured daily, building confidence and encouraging team celebration and pride. A weekly version of the electronic newsletter called the Monday Messenger is distributed to all staff members of MES, communicating information in a format that avoids the need for multiple emails or formal meetings. Administrators respect and appreciate that teaching staff feel the need to focus their time and attention on instruction. The principal, assistant principal, and counselor know the students and their families and work hard to stay informed of their accolades as well as their needs.

The principal and all members of her administrative team work to foster a supportive environment for teachers, students, caregivers, and community members. Facilitating parent and community meetings, attending parent/teacher conferences, and organizing family events are priorities set to encourage collaboration between the school, the home, and the community. This collaboration contributes to high student achievement. Involving parents in literacy and math programs encourages communication between home and school which ultimately benefits the MES student. Parent trainings on campus have addressed common parenting concerns like increasing student motivation and effective discipline

strategies, encouraging parents to feel valued and respected by administrators and staff members.

Montgomery Elementary School provides a safe and secure environment for staff members and students. Procedures for potential emergencies are planned and communicated to minimize surprises and confusion should an emergency occur. The proactive and organized nature of the MES principal and administrative team supports an atmosphere where all members of the learning community can focus on the needs of the students. The principal and assistant principal are skilled in working with students, parents, and teachers to address difficult situations and reach common ground, maintaining focus on what is best for the student.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2011 Publisher: Texas Education Agency / Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard & Commended	99	98	97	96	98
Commended	44	54	44	41	49
Number of students tested	130	117	135	138	114
Percent of total students tested	98	94	94	97	88
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	7	7	5	16
Percent of students alternatively assessed	2	6	5	3	12
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100	95	91	91	97
Commended	33	38	22	27	29
Number of students tested	36	42	45	55	35
2. African American Students					
Met Standard & Commended	83	100	80	93	93
Commended	17	25	13	7	21
Number of students tested	6	12	15	14	14
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard & Commended		93		100	
Commended		50		36	
Number of students tested	9	14	9	11	9
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100				
Commended	25				
Number of students tested	12	4	5	6	6
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	5	5	4	6	2
6.					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

12TX2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
Edition/Publication Year: 2011 Publisher: Texas Education Agency / Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard & Commended	98	97	99	99	99
Commended	62	78	71	69	51
Number of students tested	128	115	139	134	115
Percent of total students tested	96	92	97	95	88
Number of students alternatively assessed	5	8	4	5	16
Percent of students alternatively assessed	4	6	3	4	12
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard & Commended	97	93	96	98	97
Commended	35	51	51	54	36
Number of students tested	34	41	49	52	39
2. African American Students					
Met Standard & Commended		100	94	100	93
Commended		50	31	36	33
Number of students tested	6	12	16	14	15
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard & Commended		85		100	100
Commended		54		91	50
Number of students tested	9	13	9	11	10
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard & Commended	90				
Commended	50				
Number of students tested	10	3	7	6	4
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	5	4	4	5	2
6.					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

12TX2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2011 Publisher: Texas Education Agency / Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr			
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard & Commended	99	97			
Commended	53	38			
Number of students tested	116	144			
Percent of total students tested	94	96			
Number of students alternatively assessed	8	6			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	6	4			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard & Commended	98	96			
Commended	45	20			
Number of students tested	42	49			
2. African American Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100	92			
Commended	18	15			
Number of students tested	11	13			
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100	100			
Commended	54	42			
Number of students tested	13	12			
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	4	4			
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	4	5			
6.					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
Fourth grade joined the Montgomery Elementary campus in the fall of 2009 due to district reconfiguration.					

12TX2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 4 Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: 2011 Publisher: Texas Education Agency / Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr			
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard & Commended	99	95			
Commended	60	41			
Number of students tested	116	145			
Percent of total students tested	94	97			
Number of students alternatively assessed	8	5			
Percent of students alternatively assessed	6	3			
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100	86			
Commended	48	24			
Number of students tested	42	50			
2. African American Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100	83			
Commended	55	17			
Number of students tested	11	12			
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100	92			
Commended	50	42			
Number of students tested	12	12			
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	4	5			
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	3	5			
6.					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					
Fourth grade joined the Montgomery Elementary campus in the fall of 2009 due to district reconfiguration.					

12TX2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard & Commended	99	97	97	96	98
Commended	48	45	44	41	49
Number of students tested	246	261	135	138	114
Percent of total students tested	96	95	94	97	88
Number of students alternatively assessed	11	13	7	5	16
Percent of students alternatively assessed	4	5	5	3	12
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard & Commended	98	95	91	91	97
Commended	39	28	22	27	29
Number of students tested	78	91	45	55	35
2. African American Students					
Met Standard & Commended	94	95	80	93	93
Commended	17	19	13	7	21
Number of students tested	17	25	15	14	14
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100	96		100	
Commended	36	46		36	
Number of students tested	22	26	9	11	9
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard & Commended	100				
Commended	25				
Number of students tested	16	8	5	6	6
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard & Commended		100			
Commended		20			
Number of students tested	9	10	4	6	2
6.					
Met Standard & Commended	0	0	0	0	0
Commended	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					

12TX2

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard & Commended	98	95	99	99	99
Commended	61	57	71	69	51
Number of students tested	244	260	139	134	115
Percent of total students tested	95	94	97	95	88
Number of students alternatively assessed	13	13	4	5	16
Percent of students alternatively assessed	5	4	3	4	12
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard & Commended	98	89	96	98	97
Commended	42	36	51	54	36
Number of students tested	76	91	49	52	39
2. African American Students					
Met Standard & Commended	94	91	94	100	93
Commended	41	33	31	36	33
Number of students tested	17	24	16	14	15
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard & Commended	95	88		100	100
Commended	38	48		91	50
Number of students tested	21	25	9	11	10
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard & Commended	92				
Commended	42				
Number of students tested	14	8	7	6	4
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard & Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested	8	9	4	5	2
6.					
Met Standard & Commended	0	0	0	0	0
Commended	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					

12TX2